



Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date:	Lakes Advisory Committee Meeting
Agenda Item:	November 17, 2025
Staff Contact (name, email, phone):	Steven T. Chesebro, schesebro@whitewater-wi.gov , 262-458-2780

BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what, when, where, why)

A question has been raised regarding the extent to which advisory committee members or the committee itself can direct staff or create policies or procedures. Any committee's authority is dependent on the method of creating that committee. While some committee's such as plan commission are directly created by state statute, others can be created from time to time by the common council of a municipality or even by a City Manager. An example of an advisory committee created by statute can be found in Wis. Stat. § 62.23. The authority given to that committee is then dependent on what authority the creator has and what authority the creator bestowed upon the committee. Traditionally advisory committees are given the authority to make reports and recommendations regarding their area of expertise to departments, the City Manager, or the City Council. Advisory committees do not have the ability to directly implement any policies or procedures. Committee members do have some authority to determine what topics are placed on their agenda, especially when doing so as a committee or the chair of the committee who creates the agenda. However, the topics should be within the committee's authority and follow the standard procedures the City utilizes for creating agendas.

Conclusion

An advisory committee's authority is purely advisory, in that they can make recommendations and suggest certain actions be carried out. However, in order for City Staff to move forward with those actions it must align with the City's existing policies or be approved by Common Council or the City Manager.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

If advisory committees or its members are able to provide direction to staff it could result in staff being provided competing directions or priorities, take away resources from other priorities that have been established by the City or result in time being spent on topics the City does not as a whole wish to support. By having staff receive directions solely from the City Manager or department head the City resources can be used more efficiently.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Advisory committees should be providing recommendations to the Common Council, the City Manager, or Department Heads who then should use their discretion and judgment on addressing those issued approved by the Common Council and City Manager.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

None